

## Message Text

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72

ACTION EB-11

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ADP-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 INR-10

LAB-06 NSAE-00 RSC-01 SIL-01 CAB-09 DODE-00 FAA-00

PM-07 H-03 L-03 NSC-10 PA-03 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15

RSR-01 /132 W

----- 010335

R 201505Z JUL 73

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8239

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: LABOR TROUBLE AT AIRPORT

REF: LISBON 2606 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: TAP AIRLINE NOW CLOSE TO STANDSTILL AS RESULT OF SLOWDOWNS IN AFTERMATH OF LABOR VIOLENCE AT LISBON AIRPORT (REFTEL), ALTHOUGH GOVERNMENT HAS DENIED FATALITIES OCCURRED. TAP ARBITRATION COMMITTEE HAS HAMMERED OUT AGREEMENT WHICH OBSERVERS EXPECT GOP TO APPROVE ALMOST IMMEDIATELY. END SUMMARY

1. WORK SLOWDOWN AT PORTUGAL'S GOVERNMENT-OWNED AIRLINE TAP, PROVOKED BY WORKERS' UNHAPPINESS OVER LACK OF PROGRESS TOWARD REACHING NEW LABOR CONTRACT, HAS INTENSIFIED IN WAKE OF VIOLENT DISTURBANCES REPORTED REFTEL TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POINT WHERE TAP IS CLOSE TO STANDSTILL. TAP'S TWO

747'S HAVE BEEN IDLE FOR SEVERAL DAYS; THERE HAVE BEEN NO FLIGHTS TO OPORTO FOR FULL WEEK; LISBON-NY RUN SHUT DOWN, THOUGH SERVICE TO BOSTON HAS BEEN MAINTAINED. AT MOMENT, MOST FLIGHTS BEING CANCELLED; THOSE OPERATING ARE MANY HOURS LATE.

2. SLOWDOWN REPORTEDLY INVOLVES WIDE RANGE OF TAP EMPLOYEES, FROM PILOTS TO SERVICE PERSONNEL. DEGREE OF SOLIDARITY SAID TO HAVE SURPRISED TAP OFFICIALS.

3. ARBITRATION PANEL, MADE UP OF REPRESENTATIVES OF TAP, LABOR MINISTRY, AND 18 SYNDICATES, REACHED AGREEMENT LATE JULY 19 ON CONTRACT PROPOSAL COVERING ALL TAP EMPLOYEES. ARBITRATOR'S PROPOSAL IS OF MAJOR SIGNIFICANCE BECAUSE FOR FIRST TIME IT ACCEPTS USE OF INTERNATIONAL, RATHER THAN LOCAL, STANDARDS RE WAGES, HOURS, AND CONDITIONS AS LEGITIMATE MEASURING STICK IN BARGAINING PROCESS. (ONE OF ARBITRATORS ON LABOR SIDE FEELS CONTRACT PROPOSAL IS "GOOD" BUT WILL STILL LEAVE TAP EMPLOYEES BEHIND EMPLOYEES OF FOREIGN AIRLINES, WITH WHOM THEY RUB SHOULDERS DAILY AT LISBON AIRPORT.) ARBITRATION PROPOSAL REQUIRES FORMAL GOVERNMENT APPROVAL, WHICH OBSERVERS EXPECT ALMOST IMMEDIATELY, GIVEN IMPORTANCE GOP ATTACHES TO REGULARIZING TAP OPERATIONS.

4. GOP HAS ISSUED TWO LOW-KEY STATEMENTS DENYING THAT THERE WERE FATALITIES DURING "INCIDENTS AT THE AIRPORT ON JULY 12" BUT THERE ARE THUS FAR FEW TAKERS. TOP-LEVEL SOURCES IN TAP, OTHER AIRLINES, AND ELSEWHERE CONTINUE TO INSIST THAT MECHANIC AND STEWARDESS DIED. LABOR LAWYER FOR TAP SYNDICATE SAYS HE UNCERTAIN OF TRUTH, SINCE HE CANNOT DETERMINE WHO IS MISSING OR WHERE BODIES ARE. GIVEN CONFUSED SITUATION AT TAP, AND AS ALL SIDES SEEKING PROPAGANDA POINTS TO STRENGTHEN BARGAINING POSITIONS, IT LIKELY THAT FACTS WILL REMAIN ELUSIVE FOR SOME DAYS.

5. WE ARE SURPRISED THAT ANTI-PORTUGUESE ELEMENTS IN UK DID NOT SEIZE UPON AIRPORT VIOLENCE, PARTICULARLY USE OF FIREARMS AND CLUBS BY POLICE AGAINST WORKERS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TO FEED ANTI-CAETANO SENTIMENT DURING PM'S VISIT TO UK.  
POST

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NNN

## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
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**Disposition Authority:** morefirh  
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**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
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**Disposition History:** n/a  
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